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## THANKFUL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, today is my birthday, and I chose to take this opportunity to address Congress and the American people on things I am blessed with and thoughtful about.

First, of course, are my parents, who are no longer alive, but they gave me a great education and gave me a lot of love. My mother got the opportunity to see me get elected to Congress, and when I did, she said: What does that make me? I told her it made her the queen that she has always been. She passed about 5 years ago, so she hasn't been able to see these other years.

I am thankful to my mother, my father, and my grandfather, but especially to my great-grandfather, Simon, who left Lithuania with nothing in about 1884 and came to this country. If he wouldn't have taken that bold step to leave his homeland without anything at all, I probably would have been born into some union that would have led to my being killed in the Holocaust.

Simon was a great man, and this was a great country that accepted him. We have bills dealing with immigration, and I think about Simon leaving Lithuania and giving me the opportunity to be here.

I am most thankful for my constituents for giving me this opportunity to serve in Congress. I love my job. I have been in politics all my life. I got elected for the first time when I was just 27 years old, and I am a lot older than that today.

My constituents have blessed me. My district is the most African American district in the United States of America, and the issue of race and my religion—I am Jewish, which makes me a minority in my district—do not come up any longer. I have not lost a precinct in the Democratic primary because I have the best constituents in America who don't see religion and don't see race, but they simply see somebody who works hard at their job and votes their interests and tries to make Memphis more prosperous, more healthy, and more just. And I will always do that.

I thank my constituents for giving me the opportunity to serve here, which was always something I longed for. I served in the State senate for a long time. I ran for Congress once before and lost. And I used to look at this building and think, "I didn't get there; I didn't make it." I got a second chance, and the District Nine residents gave me that chance. I will be finishing my 10th year this year.

To serve with the men and women I serve with in this Congress, we get a lot of abuse, and some people don't think we do a good job. Sometimes I don't think we do a good job. I will tell you that the people in Congress, the

men and women, are all good men and women. They are likeable people. That is why they get elected. They are all winners. They may have a different perspective on what is right for this country, but they come here dedicated, and they work hard and they try to represent their district and make things better for the people in their district. I am thankful for each of you, Democrats and Republicans, for the opportunity to serve with you in this great Hall and to serve America.

I thank District Nine, and I thank all my friends and my parents for giving me this opportunity and giving me life.

#### ANNIVERSARY OF THE JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the 1-year anniversary of the signing of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. We are grateful for the accomplishments of the legislation over the past year. The JVTa has reinvigorated our Nation's commitment to fighting sex trafficking.

The legislation sought to undercut demand for sex trafficking by holding buyers and advertisers of trafficking accountable for their choices. Under the SAVE Act—my legislation that was signed into law as part of the JVTa legislative package—we have given prosecutors the tools they need to fight these Web sites and businesses that support human trafficking by knowingly advertising victims for profit.

Right now, tens of thousands of demented online advertisements are openly selling children into sexual enslavement. Predators in our communities are going online and having children delivered to their hotel rooms as easily as they would a pepperoni pizza. Today, human trafficking is moving from the streets to the Internet, making it more accessible and more insidious. The SAVE Act fights this sick explosion of trafficking on the Internet.

The SAVE Act is already demonstrating that it is an indispensable tool to attack online trafficking. Backpage.com and other exploitive Web sites, which enable human traffickers by allowing them to post ads selling the bodies and the souls of our children, are angry that the U.S. is now holding the advertisers of human trafficking accountable.

Backpage.com claims that their ability to post children for sex online is a matter of free speech. It is not a matter of free speech, Mr. Speaker. It is a flagrant violation of the dignity and the basic constitutional rights of these abused and vulnerable children. Facilitating the purchase of children for sex is not a right; it is a crime, and it is a crime of the most heartless and evil proportions.

In December 2015, backpage.com filed a lawsuit against the SAVE Act in the

United States District Court of the District of Columbia, and they specifically named me, ANN WAGNER, in their case. They are suing us because the SAVE Act has upset their pocketbooks and hindered them from making money off human trafficking sales. I take it as a huge success that we are finally moving in the direction where adults, Web sites, and businesses that exploit victims of human trafficking cannot profit and will not be given a free pass for their despicable crimes.

The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act creates a legal framework to ensure that those who sell children and young women for sex, those who buy children for sex, and those who profit from human trafficking will be held accountable for their choices. But this law will be rendered useless until the Department of Justice moves to fully implement it. To our knowledge, the Department has not opened any new investigations to target advertisers of trafficking.

The JVTa clarifies those who solicit and patronize victims of trafficking can and should be prosecuted as sex trafficking offenders under 18 U.S. Code section 1591. Failing to prosecute buyers perpetuates demand for trafficking and allows offenders to abuse our children with impunity.

But while buyers have been arrested over the past year, we have seen very few convictions. Exactly how many convictions? We don't know because the Department of Justice has not released this information. We do know that many buyers have inexplicably been allowed to walk.

America's children are not objects to be bought and sold and abused by predators. They are children who we, as adults, have the duty to fiercely, fiercely protect.

We are also waiting on the Department of Justice to levy a \$5,000 assessment on convicted human traffickers, convicted buyers who exploit victims, and offenders of similar crimes. We passed the JVTa 1 year ago, but the Department has neglected to assess the vast majority of these offenders—perhaps all of these offenders—despite a number of related convictions.

These fines are meant to help populate the Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund to provide assistance for victims of trafficking and child pornography and develop prosecution programs. We are waiting on the Department of Justice to establish and populate this fund to get survivors the services that they need.

In short, there is much work to be done and we will not just walk away. It is our most fundamental responsibility to fight to protect our most vulnerable from sexual enslavement. This is our most basic duty.

#### TSA FUNDS DIVERTED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DeFAZIO) for 5 minutes.